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ABSTRACT

An alternate approach to traditional job search methods which may be helpful to women is presented. The following five strategies are considered: (1) know what you want; (2) develop a network of professional contacts to help identify the hidden job market; (3) be selective in the job search; (4) research job openings thoroughly before deciding to submit a formal application; (5) know how to promote yourself effectively. A basic requirement is to have an attitude of assertive confidence. Specific suggestions that can help the individual to act more assertively and feel more confident during job search are offered. It is essential as a first step to define interests, skills, and values. Resource books are noted that may be helpful in deciding what job areas an individual may want to pursue, and a work form is included that may help clarify the job objective. Steps necessary to develop a professional network, telephoning people that are identified through referral, and conducting personal information-gathering interviews effectively are covered. Charts showing written information resources and other resources for researching a specific job opening are included. (SW)

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A Woman's Job Search: Five Strategies for Success

Susan L. Reis

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

A WOMAN'S JOB SEARCH--FIVE STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

written by Susan L. Ries*

for the American Association of University Women

*President, Creative Change Associates
917 15th Street, N.W., Suite 606
Washington, D.C. 20005

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A WOMAN'S JOB SEARCH -- FIVE STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

INTRODUCTION

Julie L. has decided to reenter the paid job market. She's 36 and has two elementary school children and a 15-year-old liberal arts degree. Each morning she studies the Want Ads and becomes increasingly discouraged. Recently, she went to a local employment agency where the counsellors suggested that she take some "business" courses in typing and shorthand and then come back to see them.

Sarah M. has a job but she hates it. She knows that there's no reason to stick with it -- except that she doesn't know what else to do. Every week she checks with the Personnel Office to see if any new position has come up. Each evening she, too, pores over the Want Ads. To date, she has responded to seven ads, been interviewed and rejected for one, and heard nothing from the other six. She's thinking of going back to school to get an M.B.A.--even though she has no interest in business administration, because it seems that's all that anyone is looking for.

Karen B. graduates this year. She's heard all of the horror stories about even Ph.D.s driving cabs and has begun to worry about what to do. She's taken an interest inventory that indicates she has a high interest in quantitative sciences (she could have told them that before she took the test); prepared a resume with the help of her college placement office; and signed up to participate in the campus recruiting program. Maybe, she tells herself, she'll be one of the lucky ones....

There are thousands of Julies, Sarahs, and Karens. All of them are *doing everything they have ever been told to do to get a job.* Yet, weeks and months go by without successful results.

The reason: traditional job search methods -- taking interest inventories to decide what to do with your life, registering with employment agencies, reading books on resume writing and job interviewing, responding to advertised job openings -- don't work well for most people in today's competitive job market.

These methods oversimplify the complex process of matching unique, changing individuals to unique, changing job situations. They expose people to only that small portion of the job market -- advertised openings -- where the greatest competition exists. And, worst of all, they leave too much to chance and the efforts of others.

This article offers an alternate approach to traditional job search methods. It puts the responsibility for successful job finding squarely on the individual. It also assumes a willingness to put time and energy into finding a job--full-time or part-time, professional or nonprofessional--once the what, why, and how of the job search are known. This article is based on the author's experience as a career development counselor, consultant, and trainer of more than 4,000 women and men from all educational, socioeconomic, and occupational levels. From this experience comes the firm belief that *any* individual with average or above average skills, interest, and work attitudes can obtain a personally satisfying job*--regardless of academic degrees, or how "tight" the job market is--by applying assertive confidence and the following job search strategies.

* If you are limited by circumstances that require special work hours, conditions, geographic locations, etc., you will have to compromise to some degree on the types of jobs you can explore; or spend additional time and effort to find the exceptional work place that would value your contribution enough to overlook your special requirements.

I. Know what you want.
II. Develop your network of professional contacts to help you identify the hidden job market.
III. Be selective in your job search.
IV. Research job openings thoroughly before deciding to submit a formal application.
V. Know how to promote yourself effectively.

Each of these strategies that follow is discussed in terms of: (1) what it means; (2) why it is important; and (3) how you can implement it in your own job-search campaign.

The "Confidence Game"

It is important to note first, however, that even if you apply these strategies conscientiously and persistently, you will not succeed unless your attitude is one of assertive confidence. Easier said than done, of course, because it is difficult to feel confident when you have been told, or anticipate being told, "You're not the person we want." Here are some specific suggestions to keep in mind that can help you act more assertively and feel more confident during your job search:

1. Practice saying positive things about yourself (e.g., what you do well, what you are interested in). Women have been conditioned to be modest, let others take the limelight, etc. There is a tendency to be self-effacing when talking. Ask a friend to role play an interview with you and give you feedback about the words you use (e.g., "I'm pretty good at..." vs. "I do that well"); how you say them (e.g., Do you sound as if you believe it or do you sound somewhat uncertain?); and your facial and body gestures (e.g., Do you have good eye contact? Do you "shrug" your words away? Do you play with your hair as you talk? Do you carry yourself well?).

   It might help to read one or two of the assertive skills books which are available in paperback, such as *The New Assertive Woman*, by Bloom, Colburn, and Pearlman, or *I Can If I Want To* by Lazarus and Fay. If you know it is difficult for you to behave assertively, you may want to enroll in an assertive training course sponsored by a local college or women's organization.

2. Don't tell people your "hard luck" stories -- i.e., how awful your last job was, how long you've been looking, and how hard it's been to find interesting job openings, how many "no's" you've received. Focus instead on what you're interested in, the positive steps you've taken, and the kinds of information and advice which you would appreciate receiving. Most people want to be helpful, but they can do no more than commiserate with you if you spend your time griping.

3. Recognize that finding a satisfying job requires a good deal of time (usually two to six months; sometimes a year). Commit yourself to staying with it until you get what you want, and be aware ahead of time that there will be definite ups and downs. When you've reached a temporary endurance limit, take a break for a week or two. If necessary, consider taking odd-hour shift or temporary work to keep yourself going financially.

4. Take the initiative in every way you can.

   Start conversations about your job interests at social gatherings; you never know what job opportunities might be represented by the person to whom you've just been introduced.

   If you've asked someone to write a reference letter for you and it hasn't been gotten around to yet, suggest that you draft the letter to be reviewed by that person.

   If you know *the* place where you want to work, and there are no openings right now, ask if you could volunteer one day per week to demonstrate your competency and update your experience until they do have an opening.

   Explore the possibility of creating your own job by identifying unmet organization or community needs, and then get appropriate agencies to consider funding a position to meet such needs.

   Keep in touch with people who can be helpful to you. If you are worried about bothering them by calling or visiting too frequently, tell them so, and ask for their suggestions about how you can maintain regular contact without overdoing it.

5. Apply the five following strategies in the order in which they are presented. This will help you build your confidence, because you will be taking logical, self-paced steps instead of pushing yourself into job interviews before you are ready.

APPLYING THE FIVE STRATEGIES TO YOUR JOB SEARCH

1. Know What You Want

This does *not* mean that you need to specify the exact job title and organization you want. In fact, you limit your options drastically if you do so. On the other hand, it is not enough to say only that you want a "challenging, responsible position in the field of . . ." (which is what everyone says when she or he doesn't know what she or he wants--and employers are well aware of this).

The reasonable compromise is to be able to define:

1. the type of position in which you are interested;
2. the types of organizations for which you'd like to work;
3. the major work functions which you'd like to perform; and
4. any of the following:
   - special interests within a wide field
   - types of populations, products or services with which you'd like to work
   - purposes you'd like to accomplish
   - training or advancement opportunities
   - special skills or experience which you are able to contribute to this kind of work.

An example of this kind of statement is:

> A professional staff position involving research, writing, public contact, and educational program development with a state or local government agency. Particularly interested in agencies dealing with public safety or consumer affairs programs. Prefer working with people from a wide range of socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds, and would enjoy opportunities to use my moderate proficiency in Spanish.

There are two good reasons to make this kind of statement. First, if you can't specify what you want, you have no idea where to start looking for it. In today's job market, it's highly unlikely that "it" will come looking for you! Second, a definitive statement tells potential employers that you are committed to a particular type of work and not just "shopping around." Employers are concerned about new employee turnover; they do not want to expend training time and dollars on new personnel and then have them leave for another job before they have even repaid the training investment. Thus, employers are most attracted by applicants who demonstrate not only that they can do the job, but that they mean to stay with it for at least one or two years.

How Do You Decide What It Is You Want:

1. Spend some time analyzing your own past experience, current activities, and career "daydreams" to identify important skills, interests, and value patterns. For suggestions regarding specific pencil and paper exercises to help you do this, see:

> Ries, Susan L. and Mary Jo Smrekar, "Jobs: Finding Out What You're Good At." *Working Woman*, November, 1976.
>
> Bolles, Richard N., *The Quick Job-Hunting Map.* Ten Speed Press: Berkeley, California. (Available at many college book stores for $1.25).
>
> Bolles, Richard N., *What Color is Your Parachute?* Ten Speed Press: Berkeley, California.

2. Talk with people about their jobs. Find out how they actually spend their work day, what satisfies and dissatisfies them about their work, what skills and interests they use, and pursue, etc. Monitor your responses to what they say. What do you find interesting about their work?

3. Once you have identified your important skills, interests and work-related values, talk about them with professionals in your fields of interest. Ask for help in identifying organizations and types of jobs which would relate to what you have said. (For more information on how to identify and talk with professionals in your field, see Strategy II on page 9.)

4. "Translate" what you learn from your talks with others into the language of the working world. It is helpful to conceptualize the relationship between your interests, skills, and values and the working world as follows:

SELF		WORKING WORLD
Your Interests ---	relate to ---	Types of organizations; organization purposes

For example: If you are interested in the performing arts, the types of organizations for which you would probably like to work would be those devoted to presenting, promoting, researching, and, in other ways, furthering the development of the performing arts. These could be theaters, concert halls, civic music associations, federally or privately funded performing arts programs, legislative committees which deal with the performing arts, cross-cultural exchange programs, etc.

If you are interested in environmental affairs, you would probably like to work with organizations involved in protecting, preserving, regulating the use of, and, in other ways enhancing, the natural environment. These could be environmental conservation groups, the Environmental Protection Agency, national, state, or local park services, environmental education programs, etc.

Your Skills ---	relate to ---	Types of jobs within organizations; organizational functions

For example: If you have good research and writing skills, the type of job you would want *within* a performing arts organization would be one which involved developing informational materials for the public, writing a newsletter, researching and reporting on public interest issues in the performing arts, writing position papers or grants, etc.

If you have good program development and administration skills, you would want a different type of job within that organization -- e.g., a job which would involve designing and coordinating new public education programs in the performing arts, arranging for new cross-cultural exchange programs, developing more effective procedures for the organization, etc.

Your Values ---	relate to ---	Specific work settings; organizational environments

For example: The same job might be available in two or three organizations, but you would enjoy the job only in certain organizations because of variations in organizational policies, colleagues, physical setting, salary, benefits, etc.

5. Use the Work Form on the following page to help you clarify your job objective.

Work Form: The Job I Want

The following work form is provided for you to use as you think about the type of job you want.

1. Mainly, I want to work with (rank in descending order of preference):

   _____ people

   _____ data (verbal and/or numerical)

   _____ things (concrete physical objects)

2. If you ranked "people" first or second, the types of people I would most like to work with are (e.g., age, socioeconomic, educational, racial/ethnic characteristics, etc.):

   The ways in which I want to work with them are (e.g., give information, help solve problems, motivate and manage, counsel, organize and coordinate activities, etc.):

3. If you ranked "data" first or second, the types of data I would most like to work with are (e.g., informational reports, quantitative analyses, creative writing, promotional literature, computerized programs, etc.):

   The ways in which I want to work with data are (e.g., investigate, compare, audit, analyze, edit, write, speak, etc.):

4. If you ranked "things" first or second, the types of things I would most like to work with are (e.g., machines, handicrafts, buildings, small appliances, lab equipment, etc.):

   The ways in which I want to work with things are (e.g., design, build, operate, repair, test, etc.):

5. My (five to ten) most important skills are (e.g., raise funds for causes I believe in; analyze how to make procedures more effective; decorate houses on a minimal budget; make public speeches; delegate and supervise work; etc.):

6. My (three to five) most important interests areas are (e.g., international relations, performing arts, environmental affairs, women's sports events, etc.):

   Specific interests or concerns within these interest areas are:

7. My (five to ten) most important work values are (e.g., equally committed colleagues; autonomy in my work; less than twenty minutes commuting time; varied work environment, etc.):

Summary Form

My Most Important Skills	Related Types of Job Functions
(e.g., writing informational and promotional literature; handling people's complaints and problems)	(e.g. public information; customer relations)
My Most Important Interests	**Related Types of Organizations**
(e.g., women's issues)	(e.g., women's centers, women's professional or political organizations, affirmative action offices, etc.)
(e.g., physical health and exercise)	(e.g., public health or recreation departments, health spas, sports and recreation industries, etc.)
My Most Important Work Values	**Related Types of Work Settings**
(e.g., democratic colleagueship)	(e.g., small to moderate size departments with participatory management style)
(e.g., job security)	(e.g., large, well-established organization with no major reorganization plans in the near future)

Ii. Develop Your Network of Professional Contacts to Help You Identify the Hidden Job Market

Astounding as it may seem to those who have never heard this statistic before, only 15 to 20 percent of the available job openings are ever advertised anywhere. (If only entry-level professional jobs are counted, the figure drops to somewhere between 5 and 10 percent.) Most jobs are filled without advertising, through in-house promotions or referrals from the "professional* network."

Every job has its professional network -- the people who hold that job in different organizations, people who hold related jobs, people who work in the same organization or industry, people who belong to related professional or trade associations, etc. These are the people who know what's happening in any particular job field in your locale -- who's about to leave what job, what trends are developing, which organizations expect to have openings, which organizations are having problems. These are the people who can best answer your questions about where the right jobs might be for you, given your interests, qualifications and needs. And these are the people who can help steer you into the "hidden" job market, where 80 to 85 percent of the jobs are to be found.

Upcoming jobs (most of them will *not* be available when you first make contact with potential employers) are the ones you have the best chance of getting. They are the jobs that have not yet been vacated or created, but are about to be in the near future. Since they are not yet open, and therefore, not advertised, there is far less competition from other candidates. You are able to convince employers of your commitment to a particular type of job and your interest in their organization because you have taken the initiative to talk with them, even though they have no advertised openings at the moment. You also have more time to investigate what the jobs and organizations are really like before you need to decide whether you are interested in applying.

The only way to explore this hidden job market is to develop your contacts with the professional network in your job field. There's a good deal of truth to the common saying, "When it comes to getting a job, it's know-WHO that counts" -- especially when most candidates have the necessary know-HOW, too.

How Can You Develop Your Network?

Before reading further, consider this question: If you wanted to buy a new car, how would you go about deciding what model to get and where to buy it? . . . .

Most people would read *Consumer Reports* or other comparative information, and at the same time, start talking with friends to see if they know anything about particular models of interest, or if they know of other people who do. They would talk with the people whom their friends suggest in order to get answers to their questions and firsthand information about dealers both good and bad. They would then begin visiting car dealers to shop for the best buy.

---

* The word "professional" is used to mean anyone who is connected with your field/job of interest -- whether the job is classified as professional or not.

You use this kind of an informal research process--*naturally*--whenever you have to make a consumer decision. You can develop your professional network in order to get the job information, advice, and leads you need in *exactly the same way.*

Each of us has a wide range of friends and acquaintances in different job fields. Start with the people you know; tell them what you're interested in; and ask them to suggest other people who are knowledgeable about your field and who might be willing to talk with you. Each time you develop a new contact through this personal referral process, you ask that person not only for information and advice, but also for referrals to other people who are actively involved in your job field. Within a short period of time (depending on how actively you pursue such leads), you will know, *and be known by*, most of the professional network for your type of work. The people who have spent time talking with you, and giving you much needed information and advice, will usually be interested enough in your career development to also keep you informed of job leads that sound promising.

There are three reasons why people don't think they can apply this strategy or fail when they do try. First, they don't want to impose on people by asking them for a job. Second, they are afraid that they will not make a good impression. Third, they think that the only people with whom they should talk are the "high-ups" with hiring power. All three of these reasons stem from the same basic problem: people confuse the process of interviewing for information and advice with the process of formal job interviewing (which occurs later).

You are *not* asking people for jobs at this stage. You are developing your network of professional contacts to get answers to questions such as:

- What types of jobs and organizations will best match my skills, interests, and values?
- Am I realistic to set my sights on such jobs -- what is the market like?
- Are my qualifications appropriate?
- Where are the jobs in which I'm interested available, or going to be available?
- What's really going on in a particular organization?
- How should I best promote myself as a candidate with that organization?

Most professionals, when they realize that you are genuinely interested in their field, and have some thoughtful questions to ask about your own career development, will be as interested in talking with you and willing to be helpful as the people on whom you "impose" to get ideas about what car to buy. (Everybody loves to give advice!)

You do not have to "perform" for the people with whom you talk. You are there to get your questions answered--not to sell yourself as in a job interview. (You certainly don't worry about whether or not you have impressed the friend of a friend with whom you talked about Volvo mileage rates!) A side benefit of this approach, by the way, is that you usually *do* impress the people with whom you talk, because you are able to be your natural, interested, questioning self, instead of a nervous, tongue-tied job candidate.

You don't need to talk with the managers with hiring power. In fact, you are not ready to talk with them until you have done more research about their organization and potential job openings. Instead you can talk with anybody in the professional network who has knowledge of the types of jobs and organizations with which you want to work. Eventually, when you have become more adept at this information interviewing process, you will find that it is far easier than you thought to talk with the "high-ups," because you will be informed about their organization and have interesting questions to ask--or suggestions to make--about what's going on and how you might contribute.

Understanding the differences between interviewing for information and interviewing for a job should help you feel more motivated to start developing your professional network. The following guidelines offer some specific suggestions:

1. To Develop Your Network:

   a. Start with people you know (friends, relatives, social acquaintances, etc.) to reach people you don't know. (Use the Work Form on the following page to brainstorm some good starting points.)

   b. Join professional associations related to your job field. Those organizations and women's organizations, which are committed to the advancement of women, will provide opportunities for you to meet people who can be helpful in an informal way. The American Association of University Women publishes annually a list of professional women's groups. These groups offer one or more employment opportunity services: a roster of women for employers seeking female applicants, job opening listings in their newsletters, financial aid, and career information. Send 50¢ to AAUW Sales Office, 2401 Virginia Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

   c. Don't turn down any referrals too quickly. You may find yourself saying, "That doesn't sound like what I'm looking for," when a friend suggests someone for you to contact who holds a different job in the same general field. Remember -- that person will belong to associations, and work in the same organization with others who may have more specific information and advice for you. After talking with you, she or he will be able to refer you to these people.

2. To Contact People to Whom You Have Been Referred:

   a. Phone and offer the following information *briefly* (within one minute or less):

      - who you are.
      - who referred you.
      - what your interests are.
      - what you'd like from them.

WORK FORM: DEVELOPING YOUR NETWORK OF PROFESSIONAL CONTACTS

Instructions:

1. Describe the job(s) you would like to investigcte as completely as possible in the space provided below.
2. List as many people as you can identify in the categories listed below who could be helpful to you by providing information about c type of work of interest or by referring you to others who would know about your interest field.

FRIENDS:

_____

_____

_____

NEIGHBORS:

_____

_____

_____

SOCIAL ACQUAINTANCES:

_____

_____

_____

RELATIVES:

_____

_____

_____

The Type of Job I Want:
(Describe as completely as possible.)

WORK COLLEAGUES (Past and present):

_____

_____

_____

_____

ACADEMIC COLLEAGUES (Professors, fellow students, advisors/counselors, administrators):

_____

_____

_____

SERVICE ACTIVITY COLLEAGUES (Volunteer work, extracurricular activities, internships)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Example: Dr. Williams, my name is Sandy Carter. I'm a neighbor of Janice Adams, who suggested that I get in touch with you. I'm interested in working in environmental education, and she thought that you might be able to give me some information about what's happening in organizations in this field. I'd appreciate the opportunity to have a 30-minute appointment with you, at your convenience.

b. If the person responds by saying, "Well, we don't have any job openings right now," or, "You'd want to talk with Personnel about jobs," make it clear that you are not ready to apply for jobs just yet; you are seeking more information to help you decide what jobs and organizations you might really be interested in and qualified for. (It is hoped this is the truth; if it is not, read Strategy III on page 14.)

c. If the person seems reluctant to spend the time, or doesn't think she or he can help you, ask if there is anyone else who would be able to. Don't press for an interview with a reluctant person. You do not need to make things tough for yourself. There are plenty of people who will be glad to talk with you.

d. Try to avoid phone interviews. You want the opportunity to meet face to face in order to explore your situation thoroughly. If the person says, "Why don't we talk for a few minutes right now?," respond that you appreciate the willingness to talk, but would prefer to wait until it is convenient to talk in person.

3. <u>To Conduct Your Information Interviews Effectively</u>:

a. Ahead of time, think carefully about the kinds of questions you want to get answered. (It is appropriate to bring, and take, notes for this kind of interview.)

b. Be sure to give people enough information about your job interests, skills, experience, work-related values, and concerns so that they can structure their advice based on *your* qualifications and needs, not their own.

c. Ask open-ended questions to get comprehensive information.

e. g., a *poor* question: "Does this type of work require an M.S.W.?" (Answered by yes or no)

a *better* question: "What are the common qualifications for this kind of job?" *or*, "What do you look for when you hire a person for this type of job?"

d. Ask people to brainstorm with you to overcome any barriers or dead-ends that you uncover.

e.g., "If you were in my position, and couldn't afford the time or money right now for a graduate degree--and yet that seems to be an essential qualification in most cases--what would you do?"

e. Ask for additional referrals to other professionals in the field who might be helpful.

f. If you would like to keep in contact with the person, say so, and ask if you might phone every three or four weeks to say what's happening to you and see if there are any additional suggestions for you.

III. Be Selective in Your Job Search

Most people conduct their job search with frenzied effort, but with very little focus. As soon as they hear that something is available, they "gear up" to be a candidate, without even considering whether it's worth their while. They spend hours trying to tailor their resume to each new job opening and then wait anxiously for the phone to ring with an invitation to interview. If the phone call comes, they spend more hours worrying about how the interview will go. When the time arrives, they go through the interview nervously, trying to "psych out" what the employer is really looking for. Nine times out of ten, they find out that it isn't what they can offer.

When people respond that way to any available job, they leave themselves wide open for rejection. Employers easily can see that the applicant is not really interested in -- and, sometimes not well qualified for -- the particular job opening.

Job-seeking is a traumatic process. The last thing that anybody needs to be told is, "We don't want you." It is vital to protect yourself from unnecessary rejection during your job hunt, so that you can continue to feel confident and promote yourself effectively.

The most sensible way of doing this is to know what you want, and to focus your job search on finding it. Respond *selectively* to job leads and announcements. Ask yourself the following three questions before putting your valuable time and energy into promoting yourself as a candidate:

1. Is the job really open?

   Often, organizations will advertise an opening in order to comply with Affirmative Action guidelines, or for some other reason, when the job has already been promised to an in-house candidate.

2. Am I genuinely interested in the job? Why?

3. Am I well qualified for the job? How?

If you can't answer "Yes" to all three of these questions, reject the job before *it* can reject you!

To answer the above questions accurately, you need to: (1) know your own interests and qualifications; (2) focus only on those job leads that appear to relate to these; and (3) research selected job openings as discussed next in Strategy IV.

IV. Research Job Openings Thoroughly Before Submitting Your Formal Application

In most instances, there is no such thing as *the* most qualified candidate. Instead, there are several (or, in some cases, many) well qualified candidates, with varying degrees of sophistication about the job-seeking process. Usually, it is the well-qualified candidate with the most knowledge about what the employer is looking for, and how to promote herself or himself, who gets the job.

This is one reason for thoroughly researching selected job openings. The other equally important reason is that you are looking for a job which will allow you to enjoy your work and productively contribute to it. This means that you need to know as much as possible about the job and the organizational environment, so that you can decide if your high priority work values would be met.

How Can You Research Job Openings Before Deciding Whether or Not to Apply?

1. Make a tentative decision about whether the job lead or announcement is worth investigating, by comparing what you know at this point, and what you have defined as the type of job you want.

2. Consider your work values once again. What is important to you about:

   - organizational philosophy, policies, structure?
   - work colleagues?
   - physical work setting?
   - the use of your time in relationship to your work (e.g., time spent on the job, work pace, commuting time, travel requirements)?
   - salary, benefits, status, advancement opportunities?
   - other work-related issues?

3. Use the charts on the following pages to identify information resources to help you with your research.

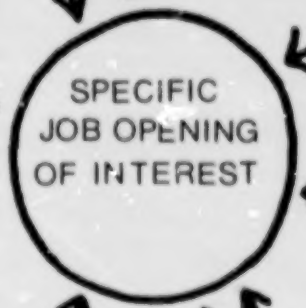
4. Apply what you have learned about developing your professional contacts (Strategy II) to get as much information as you can about:

   a. job functions and the qualifications that are going to be emphasized in the selection process.

   b. work values important to you listed under item 2 above.

   c. the "health" of the organization (e.g., any major management/personnel problems; what is its present financial status; what is its projected growth potential for the next five years?).

INFORMATION RESOURCES FOR RESEARCHING A SPECIFIC JOB OPENING



PEOPLE INSIDE THE ORGANIZATION

UNIT IN WHICH JOB IS LOCATED

- Job incumbent, if possible.
- Others with similar jobs.
- People who provide support services to the job.
- People who supervise the job, other than the person doing the hiring.
- Other technical/professional staff.

PERSONNEL OFFICES

It is most effective to use Personnel Offices as: (1) referral sources to those in the organization who have more of a direct relationship to the particular job; and (2) as information sources only for general hiring processes, personnel policies, etc. Some offices will be very helpful as referral sources; others will want you to "fill out the application and wait to be called." Don't let yourself be pressured into declaring yourself as a candidate yet; find an alternative option for getting the information you need first.

OTHER DEPARTMENTS

- People who know the supervisor who will be hiring.
- People who have liaison activities with the job.
- Other technical/professional/support staff.

PEOPLE OUTSIDE THE ORGANIZATION

SISTER ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations which share the same management structure, and/or collaborate in the provision of a service or product.

COMPETITOR ORGANIZATIONS

These people will usually know a great deal about what's going on in the organization, especially if they are profit-making organizations.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE ORGANIZATION

- Free lance professionals who serve as consultants, writers, etc.
- People who sell or distribute to the organization.
- People who serve on the Board of Directors.

RELATED PROFESSIONAL OR TRADE ASSOCIATIONS, UNIONS, ETC.

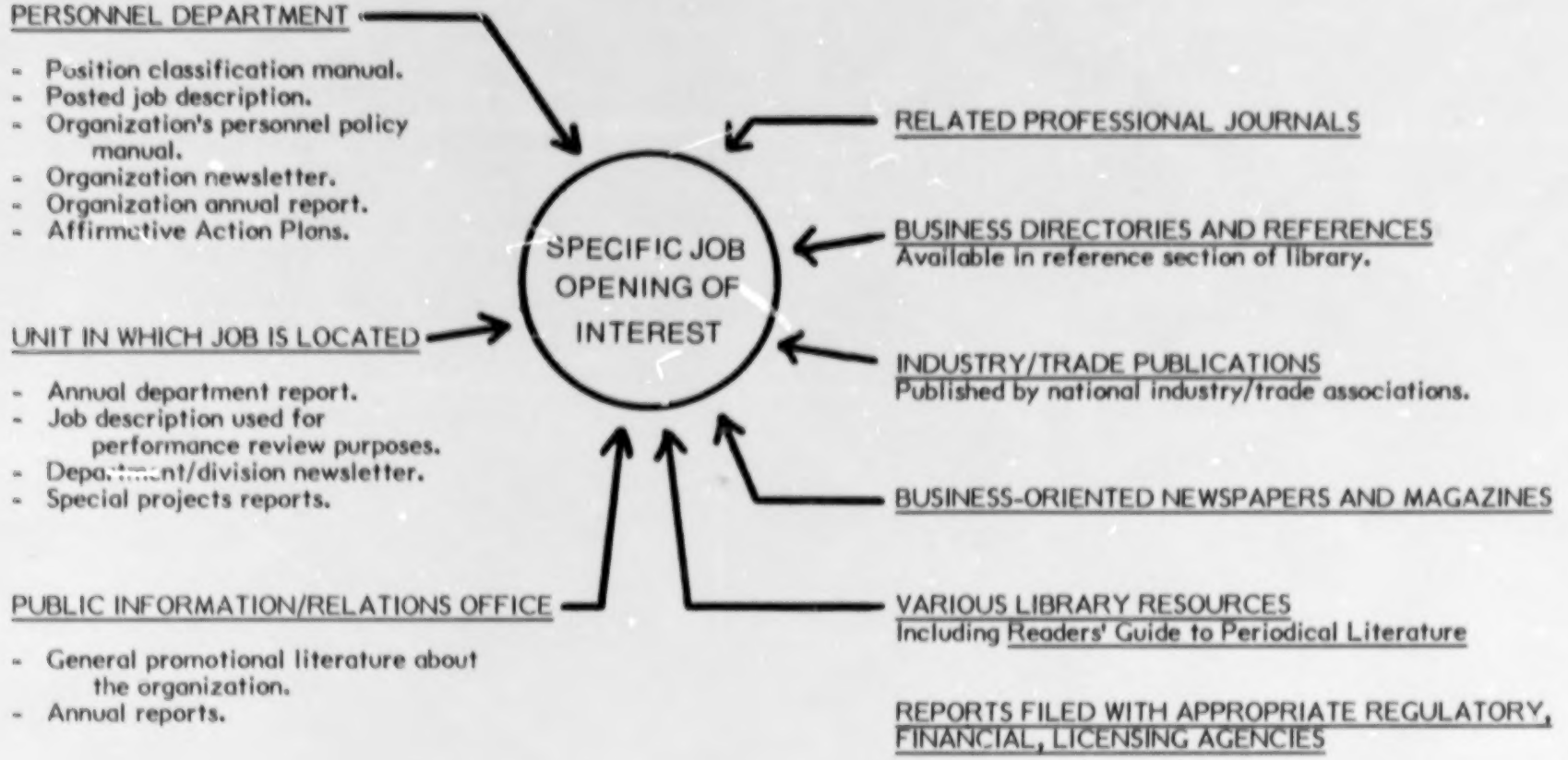
AUDITORS/ACCREDITORS/LICENSORS, ETC.

People from other organizations which have responsibilities for monitoring this organization or for ensuring that the organization or department meets established standards.

CONSUMERS OF THE SERVICE OR PRODUCT

These people can help you identify problem areas, new service or product ideas, etc. that you might want to talk about in your job interview.

WRITTEN INFORMATION RESOURCES FOR RESEARCHING A SPECIFIC JOB OPENING


PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT
- Position classification manual.
- Posted job description.
- Organization's personnel policy manual.
- Organization newsletter.
- Organization annual report.
- Affirmative Action Plans.
UNIT IN WHICH JOB IS LOCATED
- Annual department report.
- Job description used for performance review purposes.
- Department/division newsletter.
- Special projects reports.
PUBLIC INFORMATION/RELATIONS OFFICE
- General promotional literature about the organization.
- Annual reports.
SPECIFIC JOB OPENING OF INTEREST
RELATED PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS
BUSINESS DIRECTORIES AND REFERENCES
Available in reference section of library.
INDUSTRY/TRADE PUBLICATIONS
Published by national industry/trade associations.
BUSINESS-ORIENTED NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES
VARIOUS LIBRARY RESOURCES
Including Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature
REPORTS FILED WITH APPROPRIATE REGULATORY, FINANCIAL, LICENSING AGENCIES

d. the stability of the unit in which the job is located (e.g., has its budget and staff been increasing or decreasing; are any major reorganizations planned which would affect it?).

e. organizational attitudes toward the advancement of women in the work force.

5. If you decide that you are still interested and qualified for the job, continue your research to find out how you can best promote yourself as a candidate (as follows in Strategy V).

V. Know How to Promote Yourself Effectively

A good resume and knowledge of job interviewing techniques are both important in promoting yourself as a candidate. For more information on these aspects of your job campaign, you will find the following resources helpful:

Catalyst: Resume Workbook (Good suggestions on how to review all of your experience so that you can decide what to include.) Available from Catalyst, 14 East 60th Street, New York, New York 10022, for $3.50.

Lathrup, Richard, *Who's Hiring Whom.* Ten Speed Press: Berkeley, California. (Good suggestions on how to prepare a "qualifications brief" which focuses employers on your relevant qualifications more effectively than standard resume formats.)

Irish, Richard, *Go Hire Yourself an Employer.* Anchor Books, New York. (Good discussion on job interviewing and salary negotiation techniques.)

It is important to note, however, that resume writing and job interviewing guidelines are primarily effective in *keeping you from being screened out as a candidate and not in helping you get the job.* In the final analysis, it is your knowledge of the job, what they are really looking for, and your confident enthusiasm that this is one of the right jobs for you, that helps you win out over other candidates.

How Can You Research Job Openings to Learn How to Promote Yourself Effectively?

Continue using the same methods as discussed in Strategies II and IV to investigate the following:

1. The organization's hiring process and how it will affect your candidacy (e.g., Does the Personnel Office do the initial screening of applicants? How many applicants do they usually have for positions of this type? How much time is likely to elapse between the job announcement and selection of a candidate? Who will be involved in the decision making?)

   If you are concerned about being disqualified in the initial screening process (which is based on superficial factors like degree and major, number of years of experience, etc.), you will want to learn how you can avoid this process. The person who usually has hiring power is the person who supervises the job, not the Personnel Office. This person is more

likely to understand the relevance of your skills and experience even if you don't have the "right" degree, etc. How can you make sure that this person is aware of your interest and qualifications? (i.e., who, in your developing professional network, could put in a good word about you?)

2. The personality of the supervisor and the types of people she or he likes to have working in the department.

   Note: This does not mean that you should use this information to create a false impression in order to get the job. Rather, this information should be used to decide whether or not you could have a good working relationship, and, if so, what aspects of your real self you would want to emphasize in the interview.

3. His or her interviewing style.

   It is far better to know ahead of time if the person has any interviewing practices (such as asking stress questions, or using silences) which might discomfit you if you were not prepared for them.

4. Departmental needs or problems or both which you could be instrumental in resolving.

5. The negotiable salary range for the job.

6. Other negotiable factors (e.g., changes in job responsibilities, training opportunities, promotion review, time frames, etc.).

As you have probably been thinking to yourself, this kind of research does, indeed, take a great deal of time and effort. This is still another reason for conducting a selective job search. You would be expending just as much energy in a nonselective job campaign, but the results would be far less satisfactory.

The five strategies outlined in this article can ensure that your time and effort are directed toward positive results. You will be saving your ego from unnecessary rejection; you will be able to use the same well-prepared resume, instead of doing "cut-up-and-paste" jobs every other week; you will update your knowledge about what's going on in your field, and, best of all, you will become increasingly confident about the kind of job you want, in which organizations, and why and how you should get it.

In fact, you may end up saying, as did one recent job-seeker, "I'm almost sorry I got this job; I was getting to the point of actually *enjoying* my job interviews!"

Marjorie Bell Chambers, Ph. D., President
Helen B. Wolfe, Ed. D., General Director

American Association of University Women
2401 Virginia Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037